

Editorial

In the wake of the New Education Policy (NEP), the canvas of Urdu language and literature is expanding, both within India and beyond. Once a language of poets and philosophers, Urdu now finds itself at the heart of academic discourse, cultural revival, and international linguistic studies.

Urdu is not simply a language, it is a bridge between histories, a thread weaving together diverse cultural expressions. Recognized as one of the official languages of India, it enjoys a constitutional status under the Eighth Schedule. According to census data, it ranks as the sixth most spoken language in the country, with a substantial number of native speakers, particularly in states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Telangana, Jammu and Kashmir, and Delhi. However, concerns linger about its declining usage, often attributed to misconceptions associating it solely with a particular religious community. The challenges facing Urdu today are not new. Under British colonial rule, conscious efforts were made to weaken the Urdu script and diminish its literary prominence. The British administration, recognizing its deep association with Islamic scholarship, sought to replace it with English and promote other regional languages. This systematic erosion was not just linguistic but culturally aimed at severing the connection between people and their intellectual traditions.

Despite these challenges, the Indians with some support from the government have played a significant role in preserving and promoting the Urdu language.

Numerous institutions, academic programs, and literary forums have emerged nurturing its legacy. The commitment to the development of Urdu reflects a broader vision of India's multilingual and multicultural identity, ensuring that languages, particularly one as historically and literarily significant as Urdu, continue to thrive rather than fade into obscurity. A cornerstone of Urdu's literary heritage, Tareekh-e-Adab-e-Urdu has emerged as a distinguished Urdu journal, playing a pivotal role in shaping scholarly discourse across the subcontinent. It reflects the unwavering commitment of eminent Urdu scholars, whose research endeavors and literary criticism have significantly enriched its pages.

Urdu, an Indo-Aryan language with roots stretching from the Mughal era to the modern times, carries within it a legacy of art, culture, and resistance. Its role in India's freedom movement and its association with artistic, cultural, and literary endeavors underscore its enduring significance. Recognized as an Eighth Schedule language in the Constitution, Urdu continues to be a symbol of India's pluralistic heritage. Historically, the evolution of Urdu is intertwined with the development of Hindavi and Hindustani, languages that emerged through cultural and linguistic exchanges. Hindavi, which developed during the Delhi Sultanate, borrowed elements of Sanskrit, Persian, Turkish, and Arabic, forming a rich tapestry of linguistic expression. Poets and mystics, such as Amir Khusrau and Baba Farid, utilized Hindavi to reach the masses, embedding it with themes of devotion and mysticism.

With the expansion of Mughal Empire, Hindavi evolved into Hindustani, a language that became the administrative and cultural bridge of the empire. This

period saw the emergence of two distinct registers: Personalized Urdu, favoured in elite and courtly circles, and Sanskritized Hindi, which retained indigenous linguistic elements. Mughal rulers, particularly Akbar, actively encouraged Hindustani as a unifying language, recognizing its potential to foster cultural cohesion. Poets such as Wali Deccani and Fahim Dehalvi further refined the language, blending Persian aesthetics with local idioms.

By the late medieval period, Urdu had emerged as a distinct literary language, particularly in the Deccan under the patronage of the Qutb Shahi and Adil Shahi dynasties. Persian literary forms like the ghazal and qasida found new expression in Urdu, enriching its poetic tradition. Wali Deccani, often hailed as the father of Urdu poetry, demonstrated the language's literary potential, proving that it could rival Persian in both sophistication and artistic depth. The literature of Hindavi, Hindustani, and Urdu has long reflected themes of love, mysticism, and moral values. Sufi traditions heavily influenced these literary forms, emphasizing divine love and spiritual unity. Romantic narratives and didactic literature further expanded the literary scope, making these languages the voices of diverse communities. This era laid the foundation for the poetic contributions of luminaries like Mir Taqi Mir and Ghalib, whose works cemented Urdu's place in South Asia's cultural and intellectual heritage.

Today, Urdu's presence in higher education and research is an area of ongoing investigation. Tareekh-e-Adab-e-Urdu has played a vital role in documenting the language's evolution, readership trends, and academic engagement. The journal has identified key factors influencing Urdu's contemporary status, making it an essential resource for scholars and enthusiasts alike.

As part of our mission, we extend a warm invitation to all scholars and authors to contribute to this esteemed journal. Our goal is not only to foster academic excellence but also to create an intellectual space where learning is driven by curiosity and passion. In an era where modern education risks losing its spark, we are committed to reigniting the enthusiasm for Urdu literature and research.

At the heart of our values lies a commitment to kindness, respect, and intellectual integrity. We are launching initiatives to promote these values and seek the support of our readers in making them a success. Urdu literature has always been a medium of social commentary and reform, and we aim to continue this tradition by addressing crucial issues such as education, climate change, gender equality, and social justice.

The role of Urdu in shaping India's literary and cultural identity cannot be overstated. As we move forward, we remain dedicated to publishing research that not only explores its rich past but also envisions its dynamic future. By fostering a learning environment that promotes critical thinking and creative expression, we hope to equip readers with the knowledge and skills needed to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Urdu is not just a language-it is a legacy, a movement, and a bridge between the past and the future. Let us continue to celebrate and preserve its brilliance together.

Editor

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